3/30/78

"In Order To Form A More Perfect Union"

1. OPEN

An old mill town, an all but forgotten place that once was important in the labor struggle, now just a memory. The reminiscences of an old-timer who was there, who remembers what it was like: the struggle for a union and what it represented for the working man. (Maybe ending with what he thinks it's like today, by contrast, partly over the AFL-CIO Convention shots and that song about solidarity lost "Love Song to the AFL-CIO" -- have to track down guy or group that sang it and find out if performing it anywhere in next four months. Maybe some of its words gives us a title for broadcast.) (Spirit of 30's versus spirit of today.)

2. ACT I

(1) Inland Steel Plant, the East Chicago-Gary-Etc. industrial complex: not a memory: so many mills, workers, smoke, the whole scene -- all exteriors and panaramic if necessary. In many ways, on the surface, looks the same -- does it only look that way, have things changed, is there anything left to fight for if you're a union man, or maid?

(2) Cliff Mazo and sons: two generations of steel workers. Their experience, feelings, hopes -- their lives, as steelworkers, as union men. Father and Sons, of the steelworkers.

3. ACT II

(1) Open tight on the face of an old-timer of District 31, hopefully of Local 1010, maybe Sargent, talking about how it was here, organizing the steelworkers...

(2) History package, stock footage -- of steel, of the labor union movement in America -- however far we want or feel we have to go, to build the context, the background, the contrast for...

(3) The union today: Local 1010. Possible elements =

1. Balanoff, head of district 31.
2. The Olzanskys, Rosses, Hoppers, Guerko's: white, black, Mexican, women of local 1010: from the coke ovens, the open hearths, the blast and BOF's. What's it like to work in there, how feel about it, about the company, the union, about Meany and McBride and Balanoff and the rest; and what do they want.
3. The local meeting.

4. The grievances, and grievers, including a meeting.

5. The Right to Strike.

6. The Right to Ratify.

7. Any local activities and other locations, such as a coffee shop, a saloon.

4. ACT III

(1) The steelworker and the union movement, today.

1. The USW Convention.

2. The AFL-CIO Convention.

3. Anything might need out of Pittsburgh.

4. The AISI meeting at Waldorf-Astoria.

Film: "Where's Joe?"

(2) The ~~larger~~ industry issues:

1. Imports

2. Safety

3. Pollution.

(3) Tied in with pictures inside a steel mill, Inland or elsewhere. Making steel. What it looks like, feels like et al. And the men, and women. That's what we've been talking about. And ending with the same song "Love Song to the AFL-CIO" over steelworkers streaming thru the plant gates.

STEEL AND THE STEELWORKERS

Act I: Scene setting: This is industrial America; and steel is a big part of that. These are the steelworkers. And this is the kind of work they do: interviews with Ann Woods (?)
Jim Ross
a few 2 others ~~~.

Work

Interspersed with the milieu of the area: this where they live, what they do on their time off, what their ethinic backgrounds are, etc.

History

Today they make X dollars, have good vacations etc., but it wasn't always that way -- segue into Young and Sargent and the history package. End with Gyurko and statements about where the union is today, as compared with the coal miners and their strike, here's the USW with the ENA. And most of the steelworkers don't give a damn.

Act II: Local 1010:

Open with Joe Gyurko at grievers meeting. This is 1010, and some of the people who do give a damn. Interviews (short) or group discussions involving J.C. Porter, Leo Hernandez, maybe some others about being grievers, about the last strike, the attitudes of the younger ~~gy~~ guys in the mills. Segue into longer view of Mike Mezo. Deal with Mike, why he's getting involved, etc. Family affair introduces Ike, interview with him. Then Cliff, the father who got them started being interested in the ~~xixx~~ union. Follow Cliff back to union hall, do a bit more of what day in life of locl is all about. Cliff tells what he thinks local and union should be all about and what he and others like him are fighting for: on the job and in the union. General discussions of 1010 and why its considered radical what they've won so far. Pick up Balanoff at 1010 - more of the fight ~~wixx~~ within the union.

Union mmetg.

Act III: Elections:

Elections for delegates to the convention. More of Balanoff setting scene for what convetntion and union politics all abut. Greater discussion of ENA -- labor statesmanship vs. radicalism.
Maybe a tie-up: - interviews w McBride + company spokesmen - their pts of view on everything.
(This is as far as I'm getting for now)

In broad outline:

Act I — tells us what the work islike, what the people are like who do that work, what their lives and communities are like, what did those who came before them have to do to get what they've got today. Asks question: are there anymore out there now like those guys of yesteryear.

Act II — tells us who's doing the fighting and what are they fighting for, both in the workplace and in the union. tells us that they're not the majority, but this is what they believe in, tells us why they believe that

Act III — tells us what the union politics are like in the larger perspective and maybe enlarges on some of what crops up in Act II; and adds all the terribly obvious things I've forgotten

Thetease sets up the basic premise: here is a union that had to fight in order to be born, that had a spirit of militancy and confrontation in the old days; that represents who work in a dangerous area, (though they aren't the bulk of the union anymore and maybe that's part of the story too); but who are paid well and affected by that; a union that was started by the coal miners, who have just finished a long and bitter strike, but these guys can't strike. How did the USW get to the ENA, and what's going on in the hearts and minds of steelworkers today: particularly those who are active and carrying on the past activism, seemingly swimming against the tide.